

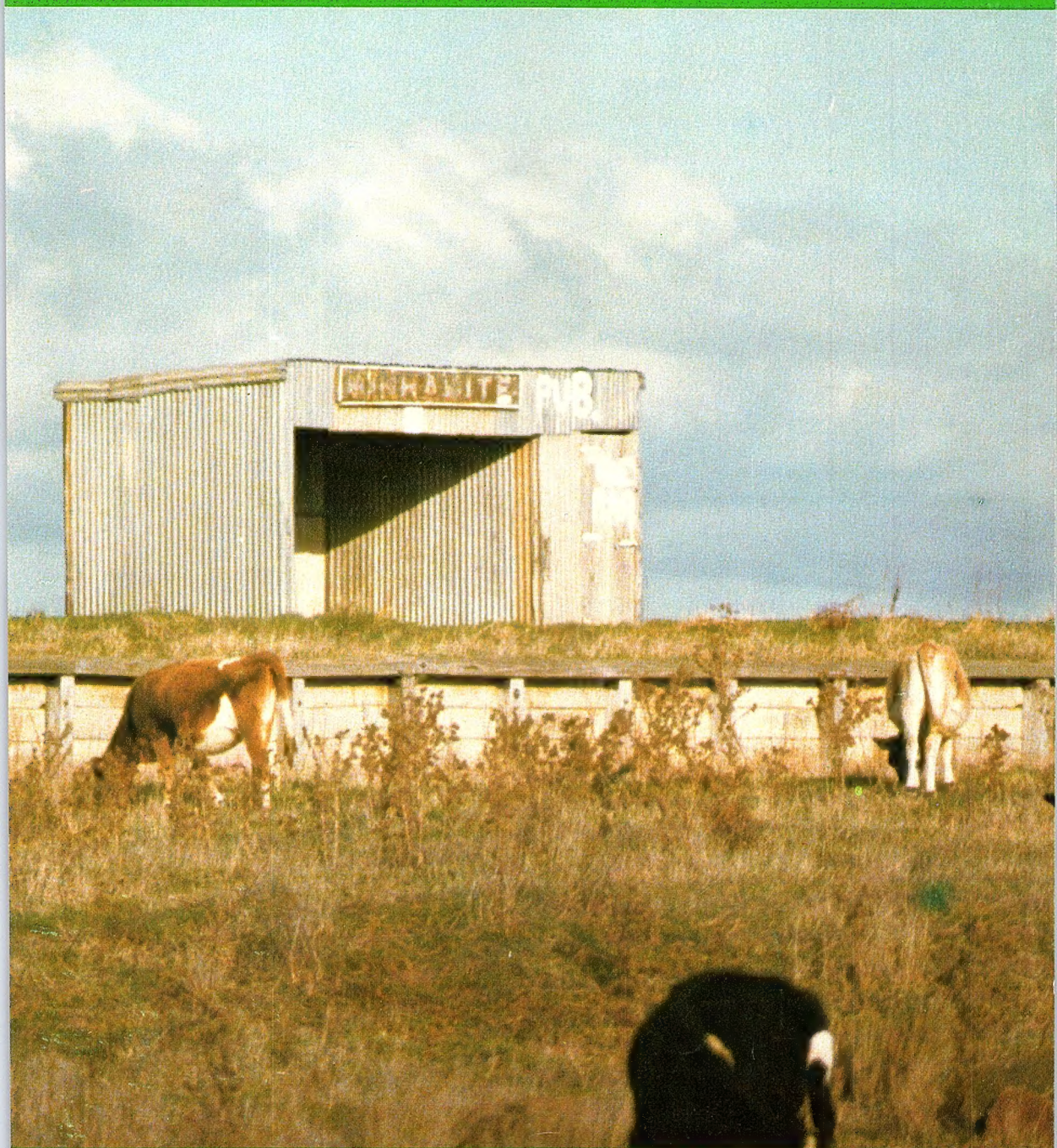
Newsrail

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Newsrail

Vol. 9 No. 2 March 1981

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Front Cover: In a very Australian scene, we see the cows grazing around Minnamite station on the now closed Koroit - Hamilton line. (Phil Carter)

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Opposite above: With the news just released that the B class are all going to be rebuilt after nearly 30 years service, we turn back the clock and see B64 hauling the *Up Spirit of Progress* past Dysaght in April 1954.

Opposite below: We see B64 again as it arrives into Spencer St station with the *Up* morning passenger train from Ballarat, 21.4.57. (Both photos Douglas A Colquhoun)

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We would like to thank all who have contributed to this issue and look forward to your support in the future. All articles, items and photos are acknowledged at the bottom.

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Day Return to Bright

HARRY WILLIAMS

Having suggested a day return rail trip to our Naval Dockyard Social Group as an ideal outing, I was faced, in view of the enthusiastic response, with the task of selecting a suitable destination.

One line, still open for traffic in North Eastern Victoria stood out as being extremely attractive in the autumn: the branch line to Bright. Three hundred and ninety three miles in one day — a lot of miles, but why not, in a fast, comfortable 600 hp DRC, enabling a reasonable time to spend at the destination?

The next step was a phone call to the VicRail Special Trains Section. After they recovered from the initial shock, they indicated that the trip was indeed a practical proposition, pending approval from the District Engineer to run a 600 hp DRC on the branch. This approval was duly received and a suitable timetable was worked out, providing a stopover of nearly three hours at Bright. The proposed date: Saturday, March 15, 1980.

Tickets sold rapidly to passengers eagerly awaiting the trip, but the dark thought was always lurking in ones mind: what if the 600 hp DRC should be unavailable? What running time problems would be created by the slower replacement types, the 280 hp or 153 hp Walker, or a DERM?

Finally Saturday, March 15 arrived, and what a relief it was to see in the early morning DRC42 docked at platform No.5, well prepared and with driver Bob Merlo anxious to get going! Departure was in fact delayed by three minutes due to late running passengers, but the run up Glenroy Bank was effortless, with a minimum speed of 43 mph, while time for the section Pascoe Vale to Glenroy was 2 min. 20 sec., at an average speed of 50.14 mph.

Wallan to Heathcote Junction in 3 min. 20 sec., with a minimum speed up the 1 in 50 grade of 58 mph (average for the section: 66.37 mph) was more than holding the timetable, however the thought of a fast Seymour run was dashed by a stop at Kilmore East — the Down starting signal, although actuated from the box, had not moved to the "proceed" position. Station staff quickly remedied the problem, with a delay of less than two minutes.

Approaching Broadford station, several horses were noted on the sg track and, with the Up *Spirit of Progress* due, our driver made an emergency brake application on the down grade, grinding to a halt half a car length past the Down end of the platform, with the intention of warning the signalman to contact sg control. But alas, the *Spirit of Progress* was speeding past, with our driver vainly hoping to catch the eye of the crew with a "slow down" signal.

After a stop of only ten seconds, the run from Broadford to Seymour was made in an elapsed time of 15 min. 15 sec., an average speed of 57.5 mph, giving an arrival four minutes early, a good time overall, in view of two unscheduled stops. While the passengers enjoyed a refreshment stop at Seymour, VR staff detected a mechanical problem which, at first, cast doubts on whether the DRC was fit to continue the trip! However station staff rang the loco depot, whose staff came to our rescue. To our delight, the fault was quickly rectified, and at 8.28 am, only eight minutes late, we were again on our way, with Seymour driver Gary Morecombe at the controls.

A timetabled cross at Euroa worked smoothly (running through a B class-hauled Down goods and crossing double-headed T class on an Up wheat special) but by now we were 12 minutes late, although 70 mph had been steadily maintained, hand staff-changing made it difficult to regain lost time.

The Up Albury pass, hauled by B61 and S315, was crossed at Violet Town, where there was a change of guards, and we welcomed aboard well known Wangaratta guard Bob Waterman, who exhibited the green flag at 9.16 am, one minute late, using only one minute of the 13 allowed.

On arrival at Wangaratta, six minutes late, we were joined by local pilot man Dave O'Bryan, as our driver had not worked the branch before. We carried on to the junction station of Bowser, where the Peechelba East and Bright branches leave the main, and made a short stop, the signalman indicating that a C class hauled sg interstate freight was due on the Up.

The Bright line has always been popular for excursion trains and here we see K151 working between Bright and Myrtleford with an AREA special on Sun.15.9.63. (Barry Eadie)





K164 runs the local goods from Wangaratta to Bright as it approaches Londrigan on 7.11.60. (Des Jowett)

However, after crossing the sg. with much whistling for the Hume Highway and red lights flashing brightly, a car came to a stop on the line directly in our path, then proceeded slowly across and again stopped on the other side!

Not to be outdone, a brightly coloured late model panel van roared through the crossing, defying all warning signals, heading towards Albury. This practice is on the increase, and is very unpleasant and worrying for crews.

In perfect weather conditions, we proceeded along the picturesque branch line at a leisurely 30 mph, the relaxed atmosphere contrasting with the speed and tight timetabling of the main line.

Our first photostop was at Everton station, where signs of the now lifted Beechworth branch were evident. The speed limit between Everton and Bright was 20 mph. A further photostop was held in the scenic location adjacent to the 1 in 40 Gapstead Bank.

A safeworking stop at Myrtleford (11.37-11.45 am) provided an opportunity to examine the yard layout, then it was on to Porepunkah, with guard Bob Waterman explaining points of local interest from his vast knowledge of the area. A photostop in this area provided an excellent view of the DRC with Mt Buffalo in the background.

On reaching Bright at 12.47 (3 late) we were greeted by local enthusiast Mr Wal Larsen, whose paragraph in the *Alpine Observer* had resulted in the presence of a number of other local people. Passengers then adjourned to the peace and tranquility of Bright township for meals and liquid refreshments, while at 2.30 the Museum at the old station building was opened for inspection, thanks again to Wal Larsen.

Having inspected the many historic exhibits, we departed Bright, on time, at 3.35, with Seymour driver Bob Crockett at the controls, having relieved driver Gary Morecombe by taxi. Ten photostops were provided between Bright and Everton in the perfect late afternoon sun, the highlight being the long 40-chain curve near mp 172, close to the top of Gapstead Bank. The last photostop for the day was at Bowman station. From Everton to Bowser the sun slowly sank, the burning off of wheat stubble creating an interesting sight.

We arrived at Bowser outer home at 6.34 pm, eight minutes late, and a further wait of eight minutes ensued

while waiting the sg line clearance, finally crossing the Hume Highway this time with all road vehicles stopped, much to our surprise!

Back to the main line and rapid acceleration to 70 mph, with our driver anxious to make up time. At Wangaratta we farewelled guard Bob Waterman and pilotman Dave O'Bryan, and, by reducing refreshment stop time, were again on our way, only three minutes down.

Away to the south we sped, the sustained high speed running causing at times violent swaying of the DRC at 70 mph, a much smoother ride being evident when our speed fell slightly to about 60 mph. The condition of the track was no doubt due in part to the passing of many wheat filled GYs during the recent bumper wheat season.

Stops were made at Euroa (7.56-8.04) to cross the Down Albury pass. (with S308 in charge) and to change guards, and at Avenel (8.25) to cross a Down goods powered by S300 and Y161, then on to the double track at Mangalore, followed by a short stop a Seymour, to change drivers.

Four minutes late, Melbourne driver Rob Brown powered out of Seymour, and we were treated to some exhilarating running, easing off power at the top of the long grade. Rolling past Tallarook at a steady 70 mph, the long beam of our headlight piercing the still night air and showing up the three parallel tracks. On through the night we sped, roaring through darkened switched-out stations at a rate very rarely experienced.

All too soon we reached Broadmeadows, after an elapsed time of 45 min. 35 sec. from Seymour (67.7 mph) our hopes for an exceptional run to Melbourne being dashed by a silver suburban train as we approached Glenroy.

Our slowed progress was further delayed when, between Glenroy and Pascoe Vale, a vandal's stone broke the guards window of the suburban train, causing a four minute delay while Pascoe Vale station staff helped clean up the broken glass. A most enjoyable day of rail travel ended with our arrival at Spencer St at 9.54 pm, one minute early. Our thanks to all the train crews, station staff Spencer St, Seymour and Wangaratta, VicRail Special Trains Section, Seymour Loco staff and Melbourne Rail Motor Depot staff, all of whom helped greatly in making a smoothly run trip.

Swan Hill Blockade

POT

The Bendigo - Swan Hill line was blocked for thirty hours following a spectacular level-crossing accident at Mitiamo on December 14 last. The accident occurred at 1.14 pm, just south of the station after the train, hauled by two S class engines (S306-S312) had rounded a sweeping curve and struck a semi-trailer loaded with 570 bales of hay.

The vehicle was dragged 36 metres along the track, and as the train ploughed through the trailer section the crate around it lifted and smashed the roof off as the semi-trailer driver was hurled from the cabin. He sustained serious injuries. Debris from the wrecked truck and its load forced the cowcatcher of the leading engine, S306, back underneath the loco, causing it to derail. Hay also entered the driving cab through the broken windscreens. Apart from a severe shaking and a shower of hay, the crew escaped injury, as did the 31 passengers on the train.

A doctor from Boort (on the parallel Robinvale line) flew to the scene in his light plane to attend to the truck driver, who was later transferred to the Echuca, and later

the Bendigo Hospital. Buses were used to convey passengers between Bendigo and Swan Hill until normal train services resumed on Tuesday, December 16.

The consist of the train was four carriages (two air-con.; two non air-con.) and guards van. In the days of steam this was a nice load for a D³, and later, a piece of cake for an R. Why the need then for two powerful S class diesel-electrics, when one would be more than adequate for such a light load? S class diesel-electrics, with only one driving cab must, like their steam predecessors, be turned before a change of running direction, except for restricted yard duties. The Swan Hill turntable, which is owned by the local Pioneer Settlement, has had its access tracks removed in recent years — thus diesel-electric S and late series X classes cannot normally be despatched singly to Swan Hill, although some have arrived there to suffer the consequences! These types of engines must work with one or more "mates", with driving cab facing in the opposite direction. Twin S class, back-to-back, have been noted on the Swan Hill pass, since the accident, including Christmas Day, when the Sunday timetable was applicable.

The engine crew were showered with straw through the windscreen when S306 hit a semi-trailer loaded with 570 bales of hay at Mitiamo on Sun.14.12.80. With all the hay lying around it was very lucky there was not a fire. (Ken Jenkins)





DIFFERENT

While photographing trains is a major part of railways as a hobby, there are plenty of other subjects to photograph and different ways of doing it. "Closed" was the titled of this photo that won Reg Buchanan the Echuca Camera Club print of the month. The subject is the door to the fitters' room under the old tank near the Echuca Loco shed.

Mal Austin shows us a different effect you can get with a Silver train.





Above: On Tues.17.2.81, we see the first set of the new Silver trains as it works between the Commonwealth Engineering siding and Dandenong yard on its way to town.

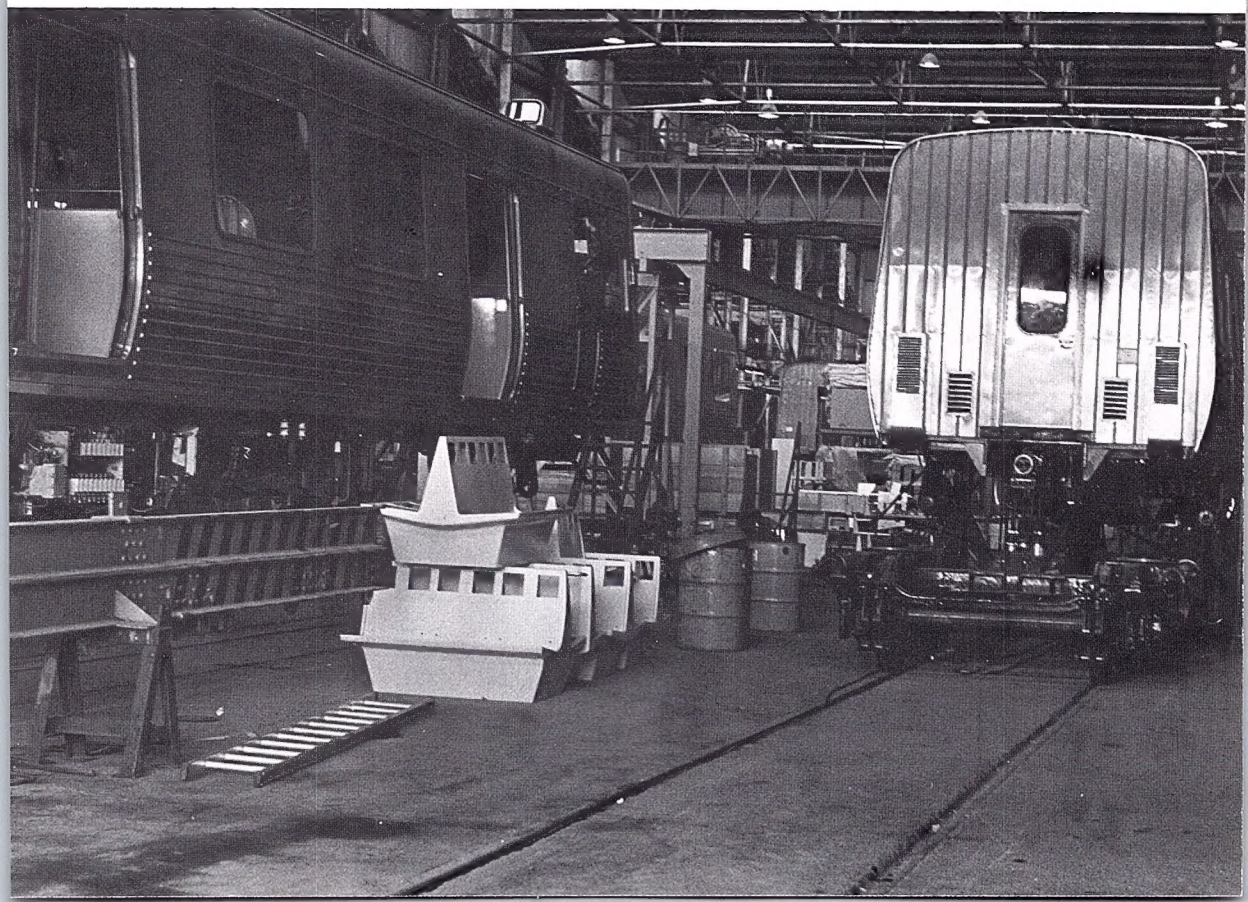
Below: Prior to departure a few minor adjustments take place. Note position of white taildisc on step.

Opposite Above: The Up Leongatha railmotor runs past the new cars.

Opposite below: Inside Com-Eng we see other cars in various stages of completion. (Mal Austin)

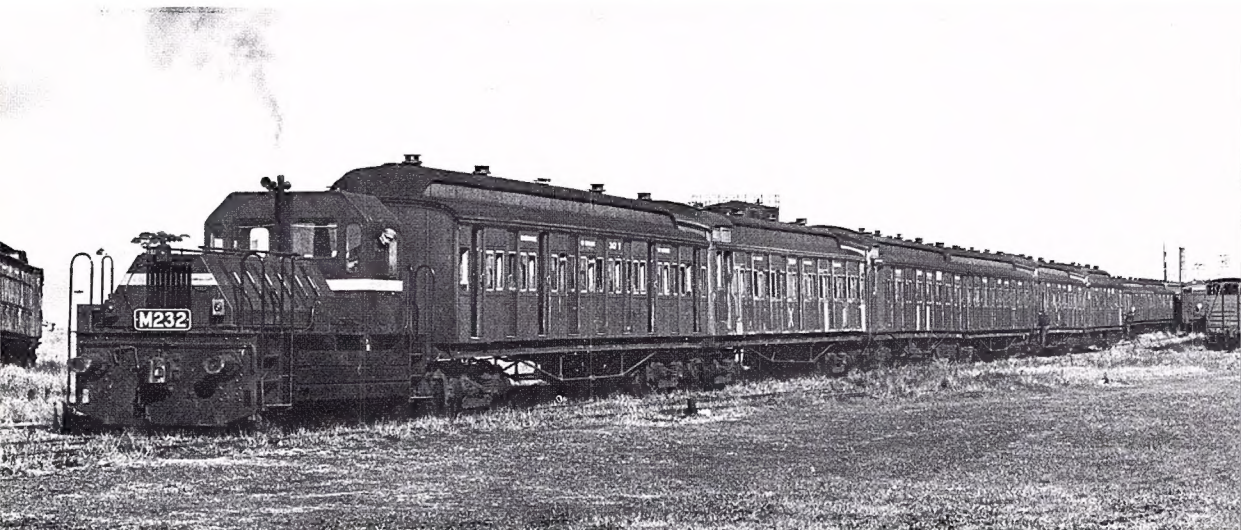
SUPER SILVERS UNDER TEST





M Class to Nowingi

BRUCE McLEAN



Newport Workshops shunting locomotive M232 has been purchased by Brunswick Plaster Mills (a subsidiary of CSR Ltd) to operate on its 16½ miles long Nowingi railway.

Since 1956, gypsum has been hauled in rail trucks from the gypsum plant to the Nowingi sidings by a 150 hp diesel locomotive constructed on the frame of former steam locomotive Y109 (later renumbered Y413). This engine carries VR-style numbers, following their presentation to the company on October 1, 1977, by the ARHS (Victorian Division).

M232 left Melbourne on January 7 attached to a goods train, but the long run resulted in severe wearing of the side-rod bushes on the "long end", and the engine was detached on January 8 at Woomelang. M232 was placed in No.3 road, and presented an unusual sight in the deserted Woomelang yards, with searing hot Mallee north wind giving the diminutive engine its first taste of what will be its future working environment!

The Mildura loco foreman removed the side-rods on January 12, and these were sent to Ballarat Workshops for repair. In the meantime, M232 was brought to Ouyen by goods train, and stabled in the former rail motor siding on January 13. The side-rods were refitted on January 27, and

M232 was then towed to Nowingi, arriving at 7.00 pm the same night. The next day it was towed by Y413 to the plant where the drive-shaft was reconnected and repairs to the radiator, generator and batteries were undertaken.

At 6.00 pm on Monday, February 2, M232 made its first return run with eight loaded GY trucks. Although it is lighter in weight than Y413, the M with its torque converter drive had little difficulty in hauling the load, and no slip was observed. The average speed for a return trip with the Y is 6 mph, but the M, with the same top speed of 12 mph, ran with an average speed of 9 mph, and reduced the round trip time by about an hour.

This first run was also historic in the fact that M232 crossed Y413 at the 10 mile loop (Sunset Siding) — the only instance known to the writer of two trains working the Nowingi line since its construction in 1928.

It was proposed that M232 would operate the section of the line between the loop and the plant, pulling loaded trucks and propelling empties, whilst Y413 would work between Nowingi and the loop, propelling loaded trucks and hauling empties. However the success of M232 and its approval by the crews could see M232 rostered on through trips.



Above: M232 puts up a struggle as it hauls off register Tait cars at Newport Workshops on Mon. 31.7.78. (John Dare)

Below: M232 rests at Woomelang on its long trip north as it awaits repair. (Bruce McLean)



History in the making as two trains cross at Sunset Siding (10 mile loop) for the first time. Y413 works towards the plant whilst M232 on its first through trip works towards Nowingi. Mon.2.2.81. (Bruce McLean)

This would ease the workload of the Y, which is in need of repairs to the running gear. Recently it was out of service to have the leading axleboxes replaced, and VR rail tractor RT28 was used.

M232 was the second of two shunting engines constructed at Newport Workshops in 1959. Powered by a 150 hp GM 6-71 engine with an Allison hydraulic converter, it is capable of a top speed of 12 mph.

At this early stage the acquisition of M232 appears to be

a successful move by the company, and it will enable continuity of production around the clock when the Y class is taken out of service for repairs, it is also indicative of the future of the Nowingi line as a major source of gypsum in Victoria.

M232 at the 10 mile loop in readiness to propel the loaded GYs to Nowingi, Mon.2.2.81. The Mallee sunset country is a far cry from the Newport Workshops where it spent over 20 years. (Bruce McLean)





HEALESVILLE LINE GOODS

Above: Y160 swings away from the Yarra flood plains towards Lilydale as it works the Up goods on Wed.29.10.80, one of the last to run.

Left: The goods departs Healesville for Lilydale.

Below: On the Down journey, some sleepers were discharged at Yarra Glen. (All photos Greg King)





BUTTERBOX ON TOUR

Above: E1108 rounds a curve near Brighton Beach on a suburban tour on Sat.17.1.81.

Below: The same train is seen at Williamstown as the loco prepares to run around the cars. (Both photos Greg King)







Traffic

GENERAL

Country pass. service to be upgraded: Despite the recommendations in the *Lonie Report* that VicRail give away all country pass. services, the State Government has adopted the exact opposite position and has recently announced a major upgrading of services. This action should bring great benefits to the country traveller and hopefully will encourage more passengers. The upgrading of the services represents a significant improvement in passenger train operations with the whole project to be fully implemented by the end of December 1983. Briefly the plan calls for the present wooden bodied carriages to be withdrawn from service progressively as new steel bodied air-conditioned cars become available. Further main points of the plan are listed below:

1. The present contract for 36 air-conditioned cars will be increased to 54.
2. The existing steel air-conditioned cars (AS, BS, AZ, BZ, etc) will be refurbished to blend in with the new air-con. cars.
3. The present fleet of 263 wooden cars will be reduced to 95 cars by the end of June 1981. A further 10 cars will be withdrawn when the Werribee electrification is finished in 1982.
4. Placing in service prior to Dec. 1983, 4 multiple unit 6 car interurban electric trains for use between Melbourne and Traralgon.
5. Railmotors to be involved as follows:
 - (a) the four 600 hp Tulloch air-conditioned cars will be upgraded.
 - (b) six DERMS will be upgraded, fitted with new engines, generators and traction motors and will be air-conditioned.
 - (c) the existing six 75' Harris trailer cars will be refurbished and air-conditioned and become permanent railcar trailers.
6. The passenger trains which will consist of permanent 3 car sets of air-con. rollingstock will be regularly

hailed by B class locos, which will be repainted for their specific purpose.

7. The present fleet of 26 B class locos will be fitted with new engines which will increase horsepower by 25%.
8. To provide a proper system of reservations, a computer type reservation system will be established and booking your seat for country travel will become compulsory.
9. To provide a faster service many existing passenger stations will close.
10. Country commuters will be able to travel to work in air-con. cars and it is planned for their morning train to form a country service to say Geelong or Bendigo and return that set in time to return the commuters to their original starting point and ready for their next morning's departure.
11. After 30.6, it is planned to operate the following rail passenger services only:
 - (a) Long Haul services.
 - Melbourne to Warrnambool
 - Melbourne to Dimboola
 - Melbourne to Mildura
 - Melbourne to Swan Hill
 - Melbourne to Shepparton
 - Melbourne to Albury
 - Melbourne to Bairnsdale
 - (b) Commuter services.
 - Melbourne to South Geelong
 - Melbourne to Bacchus Marsh
 - Melbourne to Kyneton
 - Melbourne to Seymour
 - Melbourne to Warragul

The passenger services plan calls for the maximum use to be made of all passenger rollingstock with stops at the various terminals long enough only to service the cars before commencing a further journey. The project calls for a radical change to the present structure of country trains and is an overhaul that is certainly long overdue and one must wish VicRail the success that such a progressive plan



Centre Pages: In a scene that looks more like Eastern Europe, X42 and B74 work an Up train from Portland to Ararat near Maroona. May 1980. (Mal Austin)

Above: Class leader B60 at Spotswood on an ARHS/VR Museum special to North Williamstown on Sun.26.10.80. (Greg King)

deserves. For the record, some non air-con. wooden rollingstock will be retained for special train use but these cars will not be in regular service after December 1983. (Ministry of Transport)

VicRail caters for catering: As a result of the new rollingstock coming into service over the next three years, VicRail intends to improve its catering service in an effort to trim a loss of \$4 million last year. The biggest losses were on interstate sleeper services. However VicRail's Chairman has given assurances that the overall service will be improved and not simply cut back. (Age, 19.1)

Melbourne's Underground opens: The official public opening of Melbourne's new underground rail loop took place on the Australia Day weekend, 24.1. To give the public an introduction to the new service free rides were given through the loop on 24.1 and 25.1. On the 26.1 the first official scheduled services began on the Lilydale, Belgrave, Alamein, Glen Waverley, Dandenong and Frankston lines. To encourage people to travel on the loop trains on the Australia Day weekend special reduced fares were made available which gave a reduction of up to 35% on the normal fares. It was encouraging to see a great many people taking advantage of the new services on Mon.26.1 and many trains were seen to be standing room only. The day perhaps would have been an even greater success if the weather had been a little kinder as no doubt many potential passengers stayed away because of the extremely high temperature. The first fully operational peak period the following day unfortunately didn't go without its share of mishaps and passengers were critical of the late running that occurred on the 27.1. However many passengers were heard to express delight with the new service and were impressed with the magnificent design of Museum station. Railfan and public alike can look forward to the Loop becoming fully operational with the connection of Western and Northern lines during 1981 and 1982. (Herald)

New station on Epping line: An additional railway station will be sought for construction between Lalor and Thomastown. The move has won the support of business and professional groups who believe that it could be the answer for existing problems of transport and parking in the central Lalor business district. (Whittlesea Post, 28.1)

Standard gauge to Tocumwal: The Victorian Government and the Minister of Transport are now supporting, in principle at least, the standardisation of the Tocumwal to Mangalore line. However at this stage the proposed link could be behind priority in other rail works particularly the extension of the Albury to Melbourne standard gauge rail link to the Port of Geelong. (Shepparton News)

Greater freedom for road: The Minister for Transport recently announced that as from July 1981 road operators will be able to carry almost any goods on their vehicles. The former system which meant a certain amount of protection for VicRail will cease. However some traffic will continue to be protected for rail transport and these include grain, fertilisers, briquettes, bulk cement, limestone, timber, bricks, bulk petroleum and wire from North Geelong. (Ministry of Transport)

Road damage by grain trucks: Considerable criticism is being levelled at VicRail in employing road operators to transport many thousands of tonnes of grain by road. Local Councils claim that their roadways are not sufficiently robust to take the strain of continuous heavy truck movements and are claiming compensation from the State Government and requesting VicRail to consult them prior to engaging further road operators. The Country Roads Board has suggested a top level conference be held between VicRail the TRB and local councils to discuss the problems and decide on the best road route to be used.

Wheat harvest: The 1980/81 season wheat harvest would total around 3.25 million tonnes according to the Grain Elevators Board. This harvest will fall about 1 million tonnes short of last season's record harvest. (FS)

Tenders: The following tenders were recently advertised by VicRail.

Purchase and removal or demolition of railway residence at Cosgrove.

Supply and delivery of glass reinforced plastic module guards van bodies.

Supply, delivery, installations of flashing lights at seven locations.

Supply of one track lifting machine.

Removal of telephone line between Diggara West and Cohuna.

Removal of telephone line between Hamilton and Noradjuha.

Removal of telephone line between Murchison East and Stanhope. (Age)

WARRNAMBOOL LINE & BRANCHES

New guard's van at Warrnambool: Residents at Warrnambool had their first look at a new prototype VicRail guard's van which is based on a proven American design. The van sits atop rubber mounted bogies giving a smoother ride and the van size is smaller than current vans. (WDSRS)

Timboon line: The line is now available for Y class locos and lighter and speed restriction is 20 mph. (WDSRS)

SERVICETON LINE & BRANCHES

Wheatie at Bank Box: The line between Ballarat and Melbourne usually sees the running of Adelaide Jets, Dimboola and Ballarat passenger trains and the *Overland* so it was a little out of place to find first series T class number 322 with an empty Down wheat train consisting of 46 GY wagons refueled in Bank Box loop on 26.11.80. The train crossed the Up *Overland* and Up Ballarat pass. before heading west at 9.30 am. (KW)

Sunday Jet at Rockbank: A 46 vehicle Down Adelaide Jet was sighted at Rockbank on Sun.30.11.80 hauled by C505 and C507. (KW)

Multi units at Kaniva:

1.12.80: C507-X52-X53, Up goods 50=143 vehicles

3.12.80: S312-T358-Y152, Up goods 34=48.

8.12.80: S306-T331-Y146, Up goods 9=18.

12.12.80: T391-T372-Y140, Up goods 26=36.

17.12.80: T378-T372-Y140, Up goods 26=36.

20.12.80: C510-C508-T369, Up goods 47=114.

3.1.81: T375-Y147-Y146, Down goods 29=33.

4.1.81: C505-C503-C508, Up goods 49=141.

5.1.81: C509-S313-S315, Up goods 41=76. (PM)

Multi units at Stawell:

17.1.81: C508-T332-Y146, Up goods 68=75.

19.1.81: T372-T391-T376, Up goods 39=40.

23.1.81: T369-T372-T383, Up goods 51=52.

24.1.81: C508-C506-T352, Up goods 39=97.

The following observations were also recorded.

4.12.80: B84 on Down sheep special at Kaniva.

6.12.80: Up goods hauled by S308 and B71 at Kaniva and included in the consist was New Zealand loco 4726.

7.12.80: Up *Overland* was sighted at Kaniva hauled by C509-C506.

12.12.80: Down sheep special at Kaniva hauled by X45.

20.12.80: Single B class on the *Overland* at Kaniva.

15.1.81: T332 leading S304 on Down goods at Stawell. T332 is fitted with an S class type whistle. (PM)

Ararat depot: On 18.1.81 the following units were stabled at Ararat: B66 71 72, C508, T324 327 332 352 381 382 389, W260 263, X42 53, Y137 144 146 148. (PM)

Ballarat East depot: On 18.1.81 the following units were sighted: T334 356 369, W252 254 265 242 251 253 266, Y114 141. (PM)

MILDURA LINE

St Arnaud sighting: Five T class units were sighted on a short freight on 8.12.80. They were T377, 351, 332, 321, 364. (RK)



X37 and B80 haul the Up Swan Hill passenger train at Kerang on Sun.30.11.80.
(Frank Sutton)

Wheatie ex Donald: The 2.40 am Donald to Dunolly wheat train left St Arnaud at 6.00 am hauled by B72, 82 and T365, 377 on 10.12.80. The train consisted of VHGY bogie wheat wagons with a combined gross load of 2144 tonnes.(RK)

Excursion to Mildura: A Combined Shipping Companies Promotion Tour to the Sunraysia district ran on 16.2 and additional cars were be attached to the *Vineland* for this purpose. Cars included *Norman*, VAM and VAC. (KW)

SWAN HILL LINE

Guard van ZMF1: VicRail's new guards van ZMF1 was noted in the Swan Hill yard being closely inspected by rail staff on 16.12.80 (AF)

Pass. train locos: On 24.12.80, X39 arrived in Swan Hill hauling the Down pass. This loco stayed in Swan Hill over the Christmas period and continued to haul the Up and Down pass. until 28.12.80. X40, 41 ran the normal Sunday service on the 28.12.80. (AF)

Pass. train improvements: Local MPs are fighting for the Swan Hill pass. service to be improved. It was vital that the upgrading include reducing travelling time and improved comfort for passengers. (*Bendigo Advertiser*)

ECHUCA LINE

Rice storage improved: The Rice Marketing Board plans to improve facilities for the handling of rice at Burraboi. A 12000 tonne rice storage will be completed within 4 weeks and would handle grain harvested from the surrounding Wakool and Burraboi areas. The Burraboi silo already had capacity for storing 36000 tonnes. The new complex was planned in 1979 following a record harvest. (*Pastoral Times*)

Parcels to Bendigo: Bendigo's special rail parcel service is to be reinstated following talks with the General Manager of VicRail. The service was dropped early in January and reverted to being carried on conventional pass. trains. The service was resumed after many clients threatened to go to road transport. (*Bendigo Advertiser*)

Toolamba service to go: Deakin Shire Council has accepted as inevitable the closure of the Echuca to Toolamba rail service. The line although timed for a railmotor has recently been running with a Y class and a pass. car. [The Government does plan to close the pass. service — Editor.] (*Kyabram Free Press*)

New cars not to Bendigo: The first of VicRail's new air-con. cars would go to Geelong and not Bendigo reports the State ALP candidate for Bendigo. (*Bendigo Advertiser*)

Pass. speed up to Bendigo: VicRail is aiming to reduce the overall travelling time to Bendigo to 1½ hours. Bendigo

residents will have a rail service equal to any other in the State by 1983 after the red non air-con. cars are replaced by new air-con. cars. (*Bendigo Advertiser*)

Locos seen at Bendigo: The following locos were noted at Bendigo on 4.1.81. T373, Y164, Y112, X35, T368, T322, T347, Y165, Y169, Y171, W249, W259, T341, X43, B67 and 6RT.(FS)

Echuca sightings:

5.1.81: T354, Y165 in yard.

6.1.81: T336, Y164, 165 in yard. Y164, 165, 112 left on Up Bendigo goods at 4.15 pm.

7.1.81: Y154 and 13BU and van ran the Toolamba 'railmotor' service.

8.1.81: T330, pilot loco, Y167, arrived with Up goods at 11.40 am. Y163 ran the Toolamba pass. service with 8ABE and 23C.

9.1.81: T332, pilot, Y164, 10GYs, 10M, 8 containers, 10GY and CP van left on Down goods at 9.35 am.

T332 and Y167 in yard at noon. T347 bogie cattle van and 2 GY arrived on Down goods at 3.24 pm.(FS)

Kyneton pass.: Now that the Kyneton railcars have been replaced by pass. trains due to a shortage of railcars an interesting set of cars can be seen running the service. The usual set is 36C-32ABU-40ABU-42C. The two ABU cars being connected by screw couplings.(GAJ)

SHEPPARTON LINE

Cobram pass. cut: The decision to cut the passenger service to Cobram will affect people from all walks of life the Secretary of the Goulburn Valley Trades and Labor Council said recently. He said the argument that the railways run at a loss ignores the costs to the State involved in road transport. Research shows that road construction and maintenance are as great a cost to the State as the railway deficit. (*Shepparton News*)

Record wheat harvest: The wheat harvest in the Goulburn Valley will equal last year's record season according to Grain Elevators Board officials. While state wide the harvest will be down on last season's biggest ever wheat harvest the crop in the Goulburn Valley will be as good or better. (*Shepparton News*)

Do you find you have nothing to do on Tuesday nights? Why not visit the ARHS Archives on the Down platform at Windsor from 8.00 pm. See you there!



Right: Y168 hauls 15ABE and 30C at Kyabram on the morning Up Echuca - Toolamba service on 29.11.80. (Frank Sutton)

Below: The same cars are hauled by Y163 at Toolamba on Mon.15.12.80. (Ray Chapman)

Cobram passenger train times altered: VicRail has announced a change in the running times of the Cobram to Melbourne train. The new timetable will operate from 27.1. The change will affect the afternoon train only and is a result of new schedules operating on the underground loop. The new time provides for the train to leave Cobram 20 minutes earlier at 3.05 pm. (*Shepparton News*)

Sighted at Nagambie: T336 on Up Cobram pass. and T346 on ballast train. (FS)

ALBURY LINE

Seymour council to fight rail cuts: The shire council will support moves to fight further cuts in public transport. At its meeting last week the Council voted to donate \$100 to the Train Travellers' Association to help its campaign. (*Telegraph*)

Sightings on 18.11.80: During a drive from Melbourne to Albury on the 18.11.80 the following trains were sighted:

- 8.50 am: X46, *Southern Aurora*, Kilmore East.
- 9.05 am: T381, Up Cobram pass. at Broadford.
- 9.45 am: T411, Up standard gauge ballast train at Seymour.
- 9.55 am: X50, Up *Spirit of Progress* at Mangalore.
- 10.05 am: S300-B84, Up Albury Express at Mangalore.
- 10.08 am: C504, Up standard gauge freight Mangalore.
- 11.15 am: S302, Down freight 39 vehicles at Benalla.
- 12.05 pm: Busy time at Glenrowan as the following trains were sighted practically at the same time — X41 Down Albury express, X31, Up sg freight in Glenrowan loop, crossed Down *Daylight* hauled by S317.
- 1.50 pm: T387, Up oil train with 18 empty petrol wagons.



Wodonga 280 hp railcar: The Tallangatta Valley Steam Preservation Society ran a special 280 hp rail car excursion to Wodonga on Sat.7.2. The railcar will leave Spencer St at 9.30 am, arrive Seymour at 11.20 am continue on to Wodonga with 3 photostops on the way arriving at 3.00 pm. Maximum speed will be 50 mph and the service will be run by RM82. (KW)

Seymour pass.: On 3.12.80, S302 hauled the 4.13 pm Down Seymour pass. Included in the consist was 35BU and DERM trailer 27. (RK)

ORBOST LINE

New station at Sale: Sale will have a new station in two years time. The station will be rebuilt in Station St and the present site will be free for commercial and residential development. The new station will cost 1.5 million dollars. (*Gippsland Times*)

Orbost protest: As a protest against the possible closure of the line at least 500 local citizens staged a large gathering at the Orbost rail yards following a fire which badly damaged a wooden trestle bridge on the line. It was feared that this could be used as an excuse to close the line. Eventually the bridge was repaired and the line still continues to run.

Gippslander survey: A recent survey amongst passengers on the *Gippslander* travelling between Bairnsdale and Morwell found that only two passengers believed the service could be adequately handled by buses. (*Snowy River Mail*)

Lack of refreshments: On 22.12.80, due to a strike by VicRail catering staff the *Gippslander* ran without a buffet car and 15 minute refreshment stop was made at Warragul in each direction. (CR)

Warragul pilot: On 17.1.81, E1111 was noted shunting the yard at Warragul.

YARRAM LINE

Yarram pass.: On 15.1.81, the 3.58 pm Down Yarram pass. was run by T410 consisting of VLCX451-8BW-1BG-6BU-1CW. The train left with about 100 passengers most of which detrained at Cranbourne and eventually only 11 persons alighted at Yarram. The Up train the following day leaving Yarram conveyed 13 persons and picked up patrons as follows: Alberton 2, Welshpool 4, Toora 5, Foster 5, Fish Creek 1, Meeniyah 1, Leongatha 6, Korumburra 7, Loch 1, Nyora 4, Lang Lang 5, Monomeith 1, Koo Wee Rup 8, Tooradin 1, Clyde 3, Cranbourne 9. Early running was a feature on the Up journey. Railfans who desire to do this journey will have to hurry as the service is hanging by a thread. A return trip can be made by staying at the local hotel, the Yarram Club approx. 400 metres from the station at a cost of \$10.00 per night. A few local food shops are usually still open when the Down train arrives at 8.50 pm. (JP)

Leongatha pass.: On 23.1.81 the 9.11 am train which is advertised as a railcar was run by a pass. hauled by T327 and consisting of 65BPL and 4BCE. (RH)

Recorder to Yarram: On 9.2.81 Track Recorder car No.2 is timed to run to Yarram recording on the Down journey only. The schedule calls for the car to depart Dandenong at 8.15 am stable at Yarram at 5.05 pm returning to Dandenong the next day at 9.30 am. (KW)

STONY POINT LINE

Special pass. to Stony Point: On 17.1 a special train ran to Stony Point under the title of "Mrs MacDonald's Birthday Train". The train consisted of a CW, BW and CV No.6 and timed to leave Spencer St at 7.45 pm arrive Stony Point at 9.15 pm and return to Spencer St at 1.00 am. (KW)

T395 crosses the Snowy River flood plains on its approach to Orbost on a Down goods. 21.3.80. (John R Dennis)



Works

WARRNAMBOOL LINE & BRANCHES

Werribee upgrading: The Railway Construction and Property Board recently invited interested parties to submit proposals for the redevelopment of sections of rail land at Werribee, surrounding the railway station. The board in conjunction with VicRail has commenced the design of a major pedestrian underpass which will provide access to the station platform and link Station St to the area on the north of the rail line. The underpass will include convenient shopping facilities and construction of the underpass will commence in June 1981 for completion in 1982 in line with proposed electrification to Werribee. (*Age*, 4.2)

PORTLAND LINE

Myamyn Loop: On 1.12.80, the staff section, Branhholme - Condah - Condah - Heywood were abolished and replaced by the staff sections Branhholme - Myamyn Loop and Myamyn Loop - Heywood. As a consequence Condah was disestablished as a staff section. The fixed signals and plunger locking at Condah will remain until further notice and the fixed signals will normally be secured in the proceed position. (KW)

SERVICETON LINE

Relaying work: Following a short break over Christmas work resumed on the relaying of the Serviceton line on 19.1. Since work began in early 1980 70 km of rail have been replaced. The complete relaying of the line is expected to cost some \$22 million and will take almost 7 years to complete. The relaying crew consists of 45 men. The commencement of work was delayed however for a short time in January while a vital spare part for the mobile crane which is used to lift the rail was obtained from New South Wales. (*Wimmera Mail Times*)



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Delays, Derailments, etc.

Heat buckles rail: A temperature of 41° proved too much for a section of rail near the Heatherdale railway station on the 10.12.80. The line caused severe disruption of peak trains and nineteen buses were utilised to provide a shuttle service between Mitcham and Ringwood. (*Herald*)

Ys in trouble: The 1.20 am Up Bendigo goods on the 11.12.80 presented an interesting sight with a load of 1423 tonnes hauled by four Y class locos. The locos were Y166, 107, 120 and 153. However their close association was soon over when at Ravenswood Y107 and Y120 failed. (KW)

VicRail in trouble at Albury: NSW shunting staff at Albury ran into a spot of trouble on the 16.12.80 when making up the Albury-Junee goods. Brake van FHG31704 and car carrying wagon AMNX2078 became derailed and collided with C class No.502 and wagon AMX13. The incident delayed many freight trains and the Up *Southern Aurora* and *Spirit of Progress* were delayed 42 and 18 minutes respectively. (KW)

Gippslander delayed: On 18.12.80 the Up *Gippslander* almost made it to Flinders St on time. Unfortunately at Springvale loco L1154 failed and was assisted by an Up suburban train to Oakleigh. The train was eventually rescued by L1172. (KW)

Bendigo derailment: The 6.00 pm Echuca to Bendigo goods hauled by Y112, 164, 166 with a load of 1527 tonnes

became derailed entering the Bendigo yard on 18.12.80 when 15 vehicles jumped the points. (KW)

Cobram pass. derailed: Whilst preparing the train for a return to Melbourne on 22.12.80 carriages AS2, BW26 and brake van CW18 were derailed at a set of hand held points. The train locos were T389 and T381. (KW)

Epping line fire: The 11.15 pm Down Epping arrived at Reservoir on 29.12.80 with carriage 533BT on fire. The car was extensively damaged. The fire brigade was called and took only a few minutes to extinguish the fire. (*Whittlesea Post*)

Ararat problems: An almost comical turn of events happened at Ararat in the early hours of the morning of 20.1. After detaching two red carded GY wagons from the rear of the Down Horsham goods, locos T376, 391, 372 hauled their train out of the yard and on towards Great Western. It was noticed after departure of the train that the brake van had apparently not been coupled correctly and was still standing at the Melbourne end of the departure road. The yard pilot (a Y class) coupled onto the van and hauled it to Great Western. (KW)

Wheatie grounded: The 9.10 am Hamilton to Portland goods became derailed near Branhholme on the 30.1. An assortment of 15 GY/GH wagons were involved in the accident while train locos T378, 379 were not damaged. (KW)

Rollingstock

RY at Bell: RY1090 was noted at Bell during mid-January 1981 loaded with bulk briquettes from Morwell. This wagon is stencilled 'Terminal Traffic only. To be used between Newport Workshops and Brooklyn Tip'. (KW)

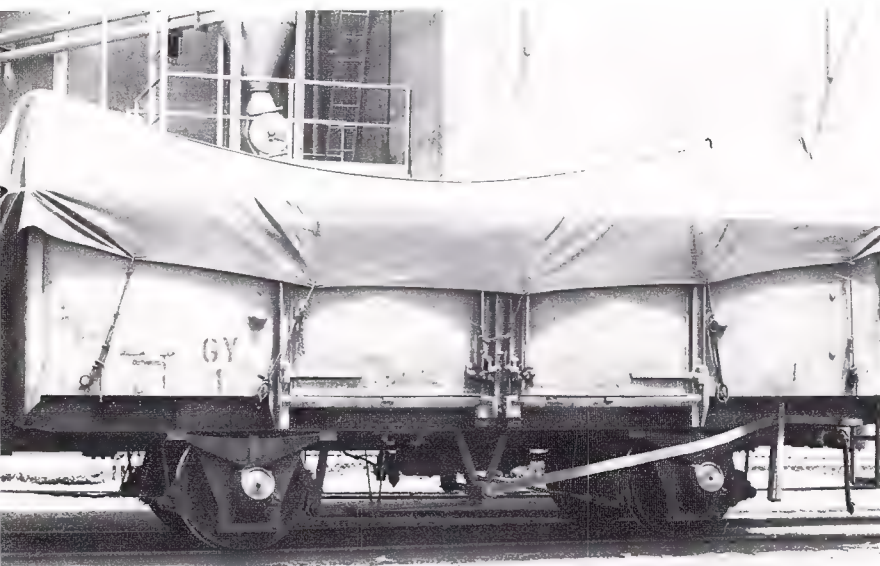
New tank wagons: Total Oil Aust have recently been supplied with several new tank wagons from Trans Rail of Rhodes, NSW. The new wagons will be used in the Paisley to Wodonga block oil train, the company having recently established rail sidings at the two terminals.

New tie unloading wagons: VicRail has recently taken delivery of new wagons which will automatically unload

ties onto the lineside area thus saving considerable man hours normally consumed in unloading ties. The wagons are redesigned ex QR wagons. (GAJ)

Sighted at Newport shops: During early December 1980 the following were sighted at Newport. 29BPLs, 16BCPLs, 2AWs, 2ABUs, 4BUs, 7BW's and *Campaspe*. Railmotors RM24 85, DERMS 57, 62, 63, Walker trailers 58, 59 and DRC40. (RK)

Conversions to KMQ wagons: At Port Melbourne and Montague there are 38U vans. All vans are stencilled with 'Hold for KMQ conversion'. (RK)



With so many changes taking place to the GY class in recent years, we show class leader GY1 at Darling's Flour mill siding, Albion in December 1980. (John Buckland)

Opposite Page:

Above: On 16.6.78 we saw 'Greaser Train' 447M-3CM-414M made up at Jolimont Workshops. It is rather ironic that two years later, 447M would be modified for permanent greaser and testing duties.

Centre: The 'Overhead Inspection' car ex 447M on delivery from Bendigo Workshops after being rewired. Conversion of the car and painting/lettering was done at Newport Workshops. The car is shown here some two months before its first run, 16.8.80.

Below: First run; the 'Overhead Inspection' train's first run was to Sandringham on 6.10.80. Makeup from the west end was 294M-overhead car-253M. This photo shows the set on 7.10.80 being propelled into the workshops to rectify some wiring 'bugs' which developed on the first run. Two pantographs are fitted for greasing use, the trailing panto is used to prevent grease buildup on the inspection cupola. (All photos Peter J Vincent)



Inside Bendigo Loco on 4.1.81 were, from left, W249, W259, 6RT, Y171, T341. (Frank Sutton)



GREASER TRAIN 1978 ...



... AND 1980





RAILWAY QUIZ

Last month's answer: The longest journey in the Melbourne electrified area without passing over a level-crossing is from Caulfield, around the Loop and then out to Surrey Hills.

This month's question: If I was standing at Great Southern Junction, where would I be standing?

READER'S QUERY

S class steam: Did the S class Pacifics ever double-head? If so can any reader give details of what other locos were involved. (PK)

GENERAL

ANR name change: The Australian National Railways has officially changed its identity to Australian Nation (AN). To go with the new trading name a new logo and a new colour scheme of green and gold will be progressively introduced to locos and rollingstock. (KW)

New locos for NSW: Clyde Engineering has successfully won an extensive contract from the New South Wales Government to supply 80 diesel electric locomotives at a cost of almost \$130 million. The locos will be similar in horsepower and design to the Australian National AL class but will have improved electrical control systems. Deliveries of the new units will start about 1982 and progress through to 1985. (*New South Wales Digest*)

FROM HANSARD

A number of matters pertaining to VicRail were discussed in the second sitting of the Forty Eighth Parliament during late November and early December 1980. It would not be practical to report the extensive questions and answers in their entirety but a broad outline is printed hereunder.

Railway passenger services: (Question No. 47)

The Hon B P Dunn (North Western Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Minister of Transport:

(a) What action is being taken by the Government and the Victorian Railways to improve passenger services to Western and North Western Victoria?

(b) Will new carriages be used for services to those areas; if so, when will they come into service?

(c) Is consideration being given to the provision of refreshment facilities on services operating to Portland and Dimboola?

The Hon D G Crozier (Minister for Local Government) — The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is:

(a) The relaying of the main line between Dimboola and Serviceton is continuing and work is proceeding on the construction of crossing loops between Pimpinio and Wail and Murtoa and Jung. These works will substantially improve the operating efficiency of the Serviceton line.

(b) Initially the new carriages will be used on the Geelong and Ballarat lines. However, they will be used on other lines when it is sensible to do so.

(c) The Victorian Railways Board is investigating the matter of on-train refreshment facilities and the claims of the Portland and Dimboola services for such facilities are being considered.

Country rail services: (Question No. 102)

The Hon K I Wright (North Western Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Minister of Transport:

(a) How many passengers travelled by rail from Mildura to Melbourne and return in 1979-80?

(b) How many passengers travelled to Melbourne and return from Ouyen, Donald and St Arnaud, respectively, during the same period?

(c) How many passengers travelled from Swan Hill and Kerang to and from Melbourne in 1978-79 and 1979-80?

(d) How many passengers travelled from Horsham to Melbourne and return in 1978-79 and 1979-80, respectively?

(e) How many rail services were cancelled between Melbourne and Mildura and return in 1979-80?

The Hon D G Crozier (Minister for Local Government) — The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is statistical in nature and I seek leave of the House to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave was granted, and the answer was as follows:

(a) Tallies taken from the *Vinlander* indicate the following passenger traffic: 1979-80 — from Mildura, 46,913; from Melbourne, 44,089.

(b), (c) and (d) The Victorian Railways Board does not record details of passenger journeys to every station but maintains records of outward passenger journeys from each station. However, this information has not yet been finalised for the 1979-80 financial year.

The outward passenger journeys for 1978-79 from the stations referred to are: Swan Hill, 19,036; Kerang, 6860; Horsham, 17,210.

(e) The *Vinlander* was cancelled on nineteen occasions in each direction during 1979-80.

Healesville - Lilydale Railway line:

Mr Gavin (Coburg) — I ask the Minister of Transport whether it is a fact that VicRail has hired a bus for an indefinite period to run a parallel service to the Healesville - Lilydale railway line. If so, can the honourable gentleman explain to the House the reasons for this duplicate bus service and the consequent waste of taxpayers' money, and will he undertake full and open consultation with all groups affected before taking any steps to reduce or remove the Healesville - Lilydale railway line?

Mr MacLellan (Minister of Transport) — The honourable member will be aware and if he is not, I inform him, that the train on that line blew a gasket or something similar and was therefore taken out of service, and replaced by a bus. The train has now been restored, although the speed limit on the line has been reduced. The bus service has been introduced as a parallel service. [The trains have now been permanently replaced by a bus — Editor.]

The Transport Works and Service Bill: for 1980/81 was further discussed and a number of Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the Bill. Brief examples are given.

The Hon Robert Lawson (Higinbotham Province) — It is encouraging to see the increase in expenditure on railways in the Bill from \$48.255 million in the year 1979-80 to an estimated \$56.875 million for 1980-81. That is an increase of almost \$8.5 million, which is well above the rate of inflation, and it marks the beginning of the long road back to health for the railways in Victoria.

The Hon Glyn Jenkins (Geelong Province) — Item 144 refers to expenditure of \$6.4 million on the duplication of that track. The work has already commenced. As I indicated earlier, the station at Little River has been reconstructed to make provision for a service running each way, and the contract for the sleepers required was let earlier this week.

The other good news is that the construction of additional country passenger carriages is continuing this year despite comments recently that the programme would not continue. I understand that the first set of carriages will become available either late this year or early next year and will run on the Melbourne - Geelong line.

The other good news contained in this Bill is the continued electrification of the line between Altona Junction and Werribee.

Suburban trains:

The Hon N F Stacey (Chelsea Province) — I support the Bill and welcome the 17.9 per cent increase for the financial year; the money is important to enable the Government to upgrade the railway system in Victoria.

Turning to Item 313 — new suburban electric trains — I am fortunate to have on the boundary of the electorate I represent Comeng which has the contract for building the new super silver trains. I do not know whether anybody else calls them super silver trains, but I certainly do; I have seen a mock-up of the inside of the carriages. I have seen the first train which is ready to operate. Passengers who use these trains will find them far more comfortable and more desirable to travel in; they will be air-conditioned, the seats will be more comfortable than in existing trains, the lay-out of the carriages will be more attractive and will measure up to the family car which is at present the chosen alternative. Fifty new super silver trains are on order; that is an important achievement. It is the sort of improvement that I welcome in the transport system.

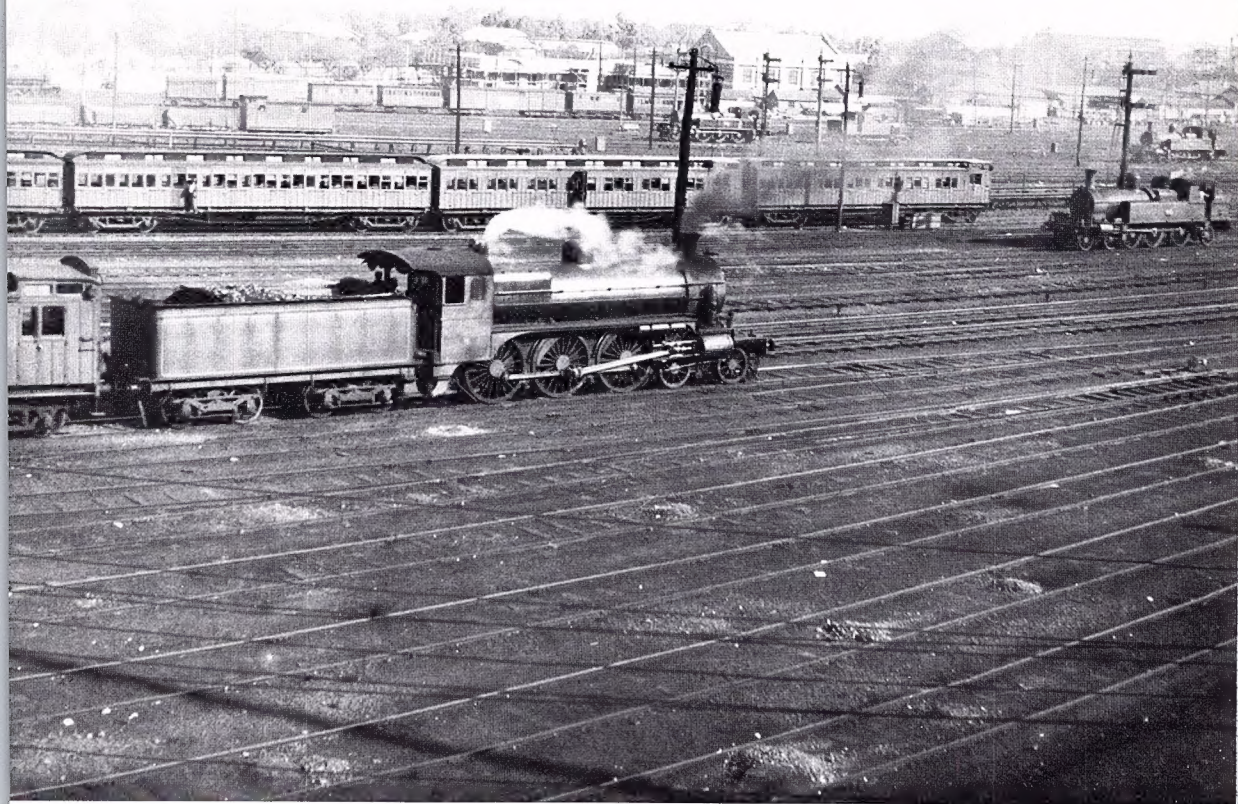
Contracts have been discussed and letters of intent exchanged for upgrading of carriages of the blue suburban Harris trains. These trains will be more comfortable than at present and consequently the last of the red rattlers will be taken off the urban network. That is an important step because people have to be given modern facilities in order to be encouraged to use the rail system — to be won back from increasingly expensive private car transport.

Retain rail petitions: During the sitting of this session of Parliament a considerable number of petitions to retain threatened rail services were presented. Examples of these are listed hereunder.

Mr Walsh (Albert Park) presented a petition from concerned citizens requesting that the public transport system be upgraded. The petition bore 1243 signatures.

Mr Edmonds (Ascot Vale) presented a similar petition containing 1125 signatures. Other petitions from the Bendigo and Upfield areas were presented containing 145 and 498 signatures respectively.

Jolimont Yards are quiet as everyone takes a break prior to the evening peak service back in the days of steam suburbans. (ARHS Archives)



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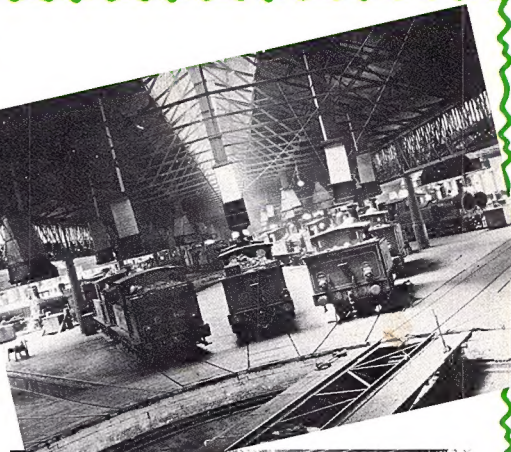
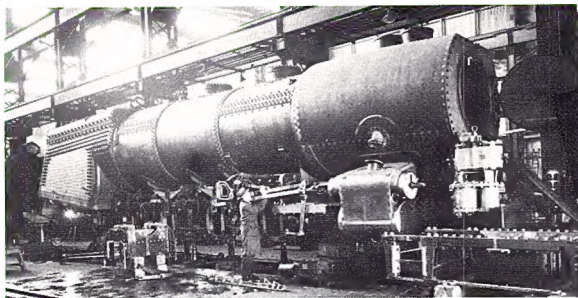
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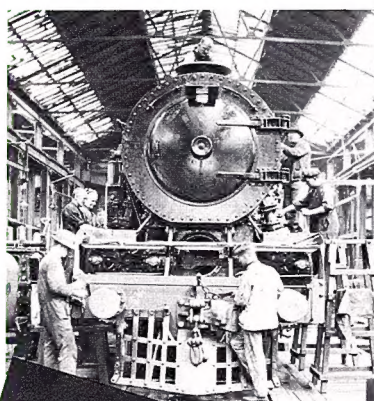
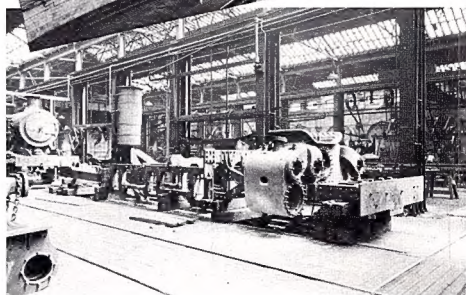


ARCHIVES PHOTO SCHEME

Members obtaining their March mailout, will be aware of the Society's new scheme of presenting Archives' photos for display and copies for sale at each meeting.

The plan is to begin at the March meeting with the first display entitled "workshop scenes" and will be further displayed in April and May whilst being joined by the next display in May.

Thus each display will last three months and a new one will appear every two months. Copies from 5" x 7" to 20" x 24" in black and white or sepia are available for order at each meeting (cash in advance, collect the next meeting).



As a service to country readers, *Newsrail* will be printing the photos as each new lot comes out, and orders can be obtained by sending a cheque or money order to Box 5177A, G.P.O. Melbourne 3001. "Attention Ray Bruce." (Please add postage.)

This scheme is a great way of raising money for Archives and is fully supported by Council which hopes that members will realise the "once-off" nature of the offer to obtain copies of some of the gems owned by Archives.

The scheme is in association with Mal Austin Photography of Dandenong, so each print is professionally copied and finished. A general developing and printing service is offered also; see news sheet for all details of prices, etc. or write to the address above.

